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**Statement by Mr. Ján Kubiš
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Executive Secretary of the United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe**

at Geneva-Hub of International Statistics

Geneva, 15 June 2011

Mr. State Councilor,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address you on the occasion of this major event organized in the framework of 59th plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians.

I would like to emphasize that coherent, reliable and internationally comparable statistics are crucial for the monitoring of social and economic progress of our nations. Official statistics provide national and international decision makers, the business sector and citizens with a picture of the economy, the environment and the society, enabling them to formulate policies, and to monitor and evaluate the effects of these policies.

The statistical work carried out in Geneva is of global importance and is constantly adapting to the emerging needs of our societies. Indeed, cutting edge issues like the impact of globalization, sustainable development or climate change are of major concern, for policy makers and citizens, and will need to be carefully measured in the future.

In that respect, the Conference of European Statisticians is one of the driving engines in the development of methodological standards, guidelines and recommendations in the field of statistics, in the UNECE Region, and beyond. Most of the decisions taken by the Conference have a worldwide impact and are consequently accepted at a global level.

Let me recall that 20 years ago, in Geneva, the Conference of European Statisticians adopted institutional and organizational standards to build trust in

official statistics. One of the objectives of these standards is to safeguard the professional independence of official statistics from any political interference: the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics were born!

Today, nine Geneva-based international organizations, jointly with national statistical agencies from member countries, are working for the development, production and dissemination of reliable statistics. This means that Geneva is the home with higher concentration and wider variety of international statistical work than any other city in the world.

Of course, we could have called Geneva capital of international statistics. But in our globalised, information society, where statistics are made available electronically to all, everywhere, at the same time, the label “Geneva Hub of international statistics” is definitely more appropriate.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Swiss, federal and cantonal authorities for the initiative to organize this reception in honor of Geneva, hub of international statistics. And I am looking forward with the support of the Geneva-based statistical community, to keeping on paving the global path for a better future for all.

Thank you!